



**NORTHCENTRAL UNIVERSITY
ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET**

Student: **Michael Higley-Vance**

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETELY FILLED IN

Follow these procedures: If requested by your instructor, please include an assignment cover sheet. This will become the first page of your assignment. In addition, your assignment header should include your last name, first initial, course code, dash, and assignment number. This should be left justified, with the page number right justified. For example:

DoeJXXX0000-1

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Save a copy of your assignments: You may need to re-submit an assignment at your instructor's request. Make sure you save your files in accessible location.

Academic integrity: All work submitted in each course must be your own original work. This includes all assignments, exams, term papers, and other projects required by your instructor. Knowingly submitting another person's work as your own, without properly citing the source of the work, is considered plagiarism. This will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the work submitted or for the entire course. It may also result in academic dismissal from the University.

EDU7707-8

Dr. Leslie Oja

**Planning Dissertation Research in
Education**

**Activity #7: Developing a Plan for a
Completed Dissertation**

Comments:

Assignment 8 – Due by Sunday, December 21, 2014

Your assignment is to write a complete **draft** of your Concept Paper, making sure it is properly organized, well-written, and in accord with the PPT Concept Paper presentation (located under the heading 'Dissertation Conference Calls) in the Dissertation Center. You will continue to work on your Concept Paper in your first DIS course, so this is a draft, but it should be the very best you can make it at this point. To complete this assignment well, you need to draw on your learning from previous courses, depending on whether you are proposing a qualitative or quantitative study. Be sure that:

- Your literature review is sufficiently thorough to support your claim of a gap in the research literature. **Approximately 20 sources including support of the research topic in**

alignment with an appropriate theory. Use the writing strategy compare/contrast for opposing views on the topic for a rich discussion.

- The gap you have identified is the basis for a feasible, interesting, worthy, and relevant study (see the Dissertation Handbook)
- You describe how the study you propose allows you to address the gap in a way that contributes to theory
- Your problem and purpose statements and your research questions (and hypothesis) are in the form specified in the PPT Concept Paper presentation and are aligned
- Your proposed design will allow you to answer your research questions. (Draw on the designs used in the studies you reviewed.)
- The document precisely follows the PPT Concept Paper presentation and APA style
- At the bottom of your paper, paste the Sections noted in the PPT Concept Paper presentation and explain how each section meets the criteria for the section.

This last section should be a brief summary of how you met the requirements for each section; you may use examples for clarification.

You will revise this document more than once in your doctoral program and your Instructor may require revisions prior to grading.

Length: 7-10 pages not including title and reference pages.

A page of text is 350 words to accommodate spacing, word length, and punctuation.

Assignment 8 is a “draft” of a concept paper; you will continue to refine the concept paper many times with a Dissertation Chair. The purpose of assignment 8 is to demonstrate an understanding of each section of the concept paper or an accumulation of the course content. It is important to understand the terminology such as research methodology and design; the research design should be in alignment with the research methodology. For example, a case study design is in alignment with qualitative methodology. The Research Method section will take time to develop. The Concept Paper Template and Best Practices should be used as a guide throughout the paper and especially for the Method section. The key is to follow and include all components of each section; writing for research is concise with validation from the literature for statements made.

Refer to the Concept Paper Template for the appropriate format to follow as the template will be followed as you continue to work on the concept paper. Take time to proofread for consistent use of standard American English conventions and consistent use of APA form and style and formatting. The concept paper includes an annotated bibliography (Appendix A) that was also included in the course.

Northcentral University Grading Guidelines – Graduate Scoring

Numerical Points	Letter Grade	Descriptor	Explanation
100-94	A	Excellent	Completes all required parts of the assignment, demonstrates deep understanding of materials, uses very clear and effective expression appropriate to scholarly writing, and has very few or no errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.
93-90	A-		
89-87	B+		Completes all or most required parts of the assignment,

86 - 83	B	Good	demonstrates good understanding of readings, uses mostly clear and effective expression appropriate to scholarly writing, and has few errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.
82-80 79-77	B- C+	Fair	Completes most required parts of the assignment, demonstrates some understanding of the readings, and writing is somewhat clear, effective, and scholarly, and has some errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.
76-73	C	Poor	Completes some required parts of the assignment, demonstrates some understanding of readings, and writing is difficult to understand and unscholarly and has several errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.
72-0	F	Unacceptable	Completes few required parts of the assignment, demonstrates little understanding of readings, and writing is difficult to understand and unscholarly and has many errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.

Using the Grading Guidelines for Success

A. The Northcentral University Grading Guidelines are designed to ensure that faculty and students have a shared understanding of assignment quality. Carefully reviewing the guidelines can help you plan and complete your assignments to the best of your ability.

B. The grading guidelines are based on four assignment criteria. Keep these in mind as you complete an assignment:

1. Assignment completion (highlighted in **orange**) – the extent to which you have followed assignment instructions.
2. Understanding of materials (highlighted in **green**) – the extent to which you have demonstrated understanding of readings or other materials.
3. Expression (highlighted in **blue**) – the extent to which your expression is clear, effective, and appropriate for scholarly writing.
4. Grammar, mechanics, APA (highlighted in **purple**) – the extent to which you have used correct grammar, word choice, punctuation, APA form and style, and APA formatting.

C. Your instructor will ignore criteria not relevant to an assignment (e.g., discussion posts and reflections need only follow APA formatting for citations and references).

D. Submission of an assignment that is outside of the page length (or slide number) parameters may result in a request for a re-submission that meets the parameters or a one step reduction of a grade (e.g., from A- to B+), at a faculty member's discretion.

Faculty Use Only

<Faculty comments here>

Michael,

You have identified an important element in planning and writing a dissertation, time. The concept usually takes about a year to refine; the dissertation proposal takes another year with the dissertation taking less than a year. Depending on how concise the paper, you may have the

process completed within two years. Give yourself enough time to do quality work and remember, life happens along the journey of a dissertation.

Assignment 7 demonstrated completing **all** required parts of the assignment, demonstrates **good** understanding of materials, uses **very** clear and effective expression appropriate to scholarly writing, and has **very few** errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.

A 100% Dr. Oja 12 14 2014

<Faculty Name>

<Grade Earned>

<Writing Score>

<Date Graded>

Planning a Completed Dissertation

Michael Higley

Northcentral University

Planning a Completed Dissertation

It has always been a personal goal to continue my education, and the thought of attaining a doctorate has always been something I have sought to begin, but never really thought I would be able to accomplish. As a single father with three children, I had accepted the notion that attaining a doctorate might not be a viable and cost efficient goal. When family and friends would ask me about continuing my education my answer was one based in family priorities, responsibilities, and the reality that a doctorate may not be the most important goal in my life, right now. However, after experiencing a life-changing event, leaving me a single father of three small children, I began to realize the personal strength I had within myself. When I decide to do something [as in my doctorate], and it is a central part of my unifying principals – it gets done.

Creating goals and a timeline of clear targets is an important part of obtaining a doctorate. Writing down my goals helps me to visualize and conceptualize what I need to do to accomplish the goals I have set for myself. Thoroughly thinking about each task or milestone before beginning to take on the challenge is also extremely helpful. Typically I will begin by creating an organizational map to provide me the visual I need to conceptualize the process of

accomplishing my goal from start to finish. When I decided to continue my education and work towards a doctorate in education I started by placing my goal in the center of the page. The map I created included all of the required core classes, dissertation blocks, and the timeline for each class. Finally, I used the map to create a checklist like the one below to help me stay focused and on track.

The timeline I created turned into a personal wiki page serving as a record of my journey at Northcentral University. I can only control a certain portion of what is ahead of me. I can ensure that I organize my time wisely so that I am ready to submit assignments on time. I can ensure that I get the appropriate amount of sleep each night. Additionally, I can ensure that I eat right, exercise, and make time for family. Other parts of the process I cannot control. I cannot control how quickly my Chair, committee, or the Graduate School will respond, but I “have to learn the rules of the game. And then [I] have to play better than anyone else” (Albert Einstein).

While the portion of my dissertation is being reviewed, I will continue working on the part that comes next. When revisions are suggested, I will view the underlying purpose behind them as efforts to make my dissertation the best product that can be produced. I will not see revisions as a failure; although, I will write as well as I can to minimize the need for them. I will remember, “The fight must go on. The cause must not be surrendered at the end of just one, or even one hundred defeats” (Abraham Lincoln). “Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts” (Winston Churchill). I will graduate and walk across the stage in Preston Valley, Arizona in June 2016. Accomplishing this goal will require dedication, hard work, and devotion. I expect I will succeed. In fact, I expect to excel.

The following timeline represents my goals for the rest of the EdD program. It seems there is a lot to be accomplished in a short period, but “it does not matter how...you go as long

as you do not stop” (Confucious). According to Northcentral University I am scheduled for a fourth dissertation block, however, I believe with perseverance, the support of family, and friends I can complete the timeline I’ve created below by June 2016. The journey towards my doctorate has taught me much more than the theories and ideas I have studied. I have learned to be a better educator, leader, father, and friend. Obtaining my doctorate while raising three children and working full time has been the hardest goal I have ever tried to accomplish. However, the rewards, lessons learned, and example I am making for my family far exceeds the obstacles I have encountered. I believe “The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be” (Ralph Waldo Emerson).

Milestone	Start Date	End Date	Done
CMP9400E	12/29/2014	03/22/2015	
➤ Comprehensive Exam – Education	12/29/2014	03/07/2015	
➤ Written Examination Scored	03/08/2015	03/22/2015	
DIS9401E - Milestones include Committee and University approval of the dissertation concept paper.	03/30/2015	06/21/2015	
➤ <i>Write the Concept Paper</i>	03/30/2015	05/10/2015	
➤ Committee approval of CP	05/11/2015	05/24/2015	
➤ GS approval of CP	05/25/2015	06/07/2015	
➤ <i>Begin writing the Dissertation Proposal – Title page through chapter 3</i>	04/27/2015	06/21/2015	
DIS9402E - Milestones include Committee and University approval of the dissertation proposal.	06/22/2015	09/13/2015	
➤ <i>Complete writing the Dissertation Proposal – Title page through chapter 3</i>	06/22/2015	07/05/2015	
➤ Committee approval of DP	07/06/2015	07/19/2015	
➤ GS approval of DP	07/20/2015	08/02/2015	

➤ <i>IRB application submitted/approved</i>	08/03/2015	08/16/2015	
➤ Data Collection	08/16/2015	09/13/2015	
DIS9403E - Milestones include Committee and University approval of the dissertation manuscript.	09/14/2015	12/06/2015	
➤ <i>Begin writing the Dissertation Manuscript – Chapter 4 & 5</i>	09/14/2015	11/08/2015	
➤ Committee approval of DM	11/09/2015	11/22/2015	
➤ GS approval of DM	11/23/2015	12/06/2015	
DIS9403E	12/07/2015	02/28/2016	
➤ <i>Oral Examination</i>	12/07/2015	02/28/2016	
➤ Request Graduation	March 2016	March 2016	
➤ Submit DM for ProQuest Publication	March 2016	March 2016	
Graduation	June 2016	June 2016	